



NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL-INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Office of Corporate Communications

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NGA hosts first GIS fair for local high school students

April 22, 2014

SPRINGFIELD, Va. — The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency opened its doors here April 22 to local Fairfax County students for its inaugural Geospatial Information Systems fair.



A Fairfax County student presents her project to NGA judges at the April 22 GIS Fair at the agency's Springfield, Va., campus. (Photo by Kevin Clark, NGA Office of Corporate Communications)

The fair was intended to enhance the NGA's outreach to local students in the science, technology, engineering and mathematic fields, while introducing them to NGA and the intelligence community.

More than 70 seniors enrolled in a year-long GIS course at Robert E. Lee and South Lakes high schools received agency mission briefings and met with analysts to discuss student opportunities within NGA, learn how education can lead to successful intelligence careers, and to see first-hand the impacts STEM has in the federal government.

of experiences in the classroom," said Chad Lehman, South Lakes High School Assistant Principal. "This is what we want education to look like and feel like in the 21st century, so it is important that the students gain this real world, career-focused look at what GIS can really do."

"This has just been an outstanding experience for the students because it is impossible to replicate these kinds

To complete the course, students were required to complete a final GIS project and present it to NGA analysts serving as judges during the fair. Projects ranged from using geospatial intelligence to compare speeding and alcohol-related vehicular accidents in Fairfax County, to the correlation of gun sales and crime rates in Virginia, to determining potential locations for a new imaginary Washington Redskins football stadium. The judges' primary purpose was to provide mentoring through interaction and constructive feedback.

NGA Director Letitia Long provided encouragement to students to continue pursuing STEM-related subjects and careers. Long shared her personal story of how she persevered as one of a few women enrolled in an electrical engineering program. She stressed how important it is for STEM fields to be diverse and encouraged students to consider NGA when they seek internships or jobs after graduating college.

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“The GIS course is a co-curricular course with James Madison University, so if students choose to, they can earn college credit upon completing the course,” said Lehman. “I have been in the education field for 15 years and this is the first time I’ve seen a university, a public high school and an intelligence agency collaborate at such a powerful level – and it has truly allowed the students to thrive.”

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About NGA...

The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency delivers world-class geospatial intelligence, or GEOINT, that provides a decisive advantage to warfighters, policymakers, warfighters, intelligence professionals and first responders. Both an intelligence agency and combat support agency, NGA fulfills the president’s national security priorities in partnership with the intelligence community and the Department of Defense.

NGA also is the lead federal agency for GEOINT and manages a global consortium of more than 400 commercial and government relationships. NGA is headquartered in Springfield, Va., and has two major locations in St. Louis and Arnold, Mo. Hundreds of NGA employees serve on support teams at U.S. military, diplomatic and allied locations around the world.

National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency

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